

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 6-15, 18, 19, 21 and 22 are pending in this application. Claims 11-15 are allowed. Claim 1 is amended in addition to the Amendments that were requested (but not entered by the Patent Office). That is, by this Amendment, claim 1 is amended to even further distinguish over the applied references, claims 9, 15 and 18 are amended for clarity only, and claims 21 and 22 are added. The specification also is amended to include reference to Fig. 7 which was added in the November 21, 2007 Amendment. Support for the amendments to claim 1 can be found, for example, in Fig. 3 and paragraph [0026]. Support for added claims 21 and 22 can be found, for example, in Fig. 3 and paragraph [0031], respectively. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments to claim 1 and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

I. Allowed Claims

Applicants appreciate the Office Action's indication that claims 11-15 are allowed. It is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 3, 6-10, 18, 19, 21 and 22 are allowable for the reasons set forth below.

II. Amendments to the Specification

The Advisory Action asserts that the amendments to the specification listed above "may contain new matter". However, the amendments to the specification are made only to refer to Fig. 7, which was added in the November 21, 2007 Amendment. Fig. 7 was not asserted by the Examiner in the Office Action or the Advisory Action to constitute new matter. Moreover, as discussed in the November 21 Amendment, support for Fig. 7 can be found in, for example, lines 10-14 of paragraph [0026], and lines 1-5 of paragraph [0029], of the specification. Thus, the amendments to the specification do not contain new matter.

III. Rejection of Claims 18 and 19

The Office Action rejects claims 18 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Kawano et al. (Kawano), JP-A-2000-318904. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Kawano fails to disclose or render obvious an inclination that places an outermost portion of a second drive shaft at a location that is one of more downstream and more upstream than the location of the first drive shaft, as recited in independent claim 18.

Kawano discloses a device having driving roller means 15 that includes a driving shaft 15A, and follower roller means 16 that includes revolving shafts 16A (see Fig. 13b; paragraphs [0073] to [0075] of computer generated English-language translation). The Office Action asserts that the driving shaft 15A corresponds to the claimed first drive shaft, and that the revolving shafts 16A correspond to the claimed second drive shaft. However, as clearly shown in Fig. 13b, although axes of the revolving shafts 16A are angled with respect to the center of the Fig. 13b, the inclination does not place an outermost portion of either revolving shaft 16A at a location that is one of more downstream and more upstream than the location of the driving shaft 15A. Instead, the outermost portion of either revolving shaft 16A is at a location that is the same as the location of the driving shaft 15A in a paper sheet feed direction (see the left and right sides of Fig. 13b which shows the axes of the outermost portion of both revolving shafts 16A sharing the same plane as the axis of the driving shaft 15A). Thus, Kawano fails to disclose or render obvious an inclination that places an outermost portion of a second drive shaft at a location that is one of more downstream and more upstream than the location of the first drive shaft, as recited in independent claim 18.

Thus, claim 18 is patentable over Kawano. Because claim 19 incorporates the features of claim 18, claim 19 also is patentable over Kawano for at least this reason, as well as for the additional features this claim recites. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

IV. Rejection of Claims 1, 3, 6-8 and 10

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 3, 6-8 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Fowler et al. (Fowler), U.S. Patent No. 3,666,262, in view of Sako et al. (Sako), U.S. Patent No. 6,073,927. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The combination of Fowler and Sako fails to disclose or render obvious the combination of features recited in claim 1, including a drive roller and a driven roller that are disposed at an immediately downstream side from a reading point of an image reading part, as recited in independent claim 1.

Fowler discloses a magnetic card transport having a read amplifier 37, drive rollers 8, 9 and 10 and associated drive rollers 3, 4 and 5 (see Figs. 1 and 3a and 3b; col. 2, lines 64-67 and col. 4, lines 14-38). The Office Action asserts that the read amplifier 37 corresponds to the claimed image reading part, that the drive rollers 8, 9 and 10 correspond to the claimed driven rollers and that the associated drive rollers 3, 4 and 5 correspond to the claimed drive rollers. However, as shown in Fig. 1, the drive rollers 8, 9 and 10 and associated drive rollers 3, 4 and 5 are disposed at an upstream side from the read amplifier 37, not an immediately downstream side from the read amplifier 37 (see col. 2, lines 54-57, which discloses that throat 26, shown on the left of Fig. 1, is "the beginning of the track" and an entry point for the card). Further, Sako fails to overcome the deficiencies of Fowler, and is only cited as allegedly disclosing a coefficient of friction of an outer layer of a driven roller that is smaller than a coefficient of friction of an outer layer of a drive roller. Thus, the combination of Fowler and Sako fails to disclose or render obvious a drive roller and a driven roller that are disposed at an immediately downstream side from a reading point of an image reading part, as recited in independent claim 1. As described in Applicants' specification, the claimed location of the rollers contributes to maintaining stability of the reading operation (see

paragraph [0031] of the specification). Therefore, claim 1 is patentable over the combination of Fowler and Sako.

Because claims 3, 6-8 and 10 incorporate the features of claim 1, these claims also are patentable over the applied references for at least this reason, as well as for the additional features these claims recite. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

V. Rejection of Claim 9

The Office Action rejects claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Fowler in view of Sako, and further in view of Kawano. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Because claim 9 incorporates the features of claim 1, and because Kawano fails to overcome the deficiencies of Fowler and Sako, claim 9 also is patentable over the applied references for at least these reasons, as well as for the additional features claim 9 recites. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Further, claim 9 is amended to change "an axis of the driven roller" to "the axis of the driven roller". Antecedent basis for "the axis of the driven roller" is found in line 11 of claim 1.

VI. Claims 21 and 22

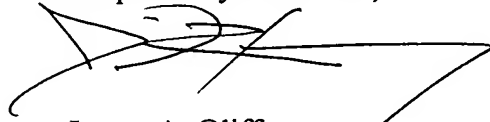
Added claims 21 and 22 also are patentable over the applied references at least for at least their dependency to independent claim 1, as well as for the additional features these claims recite.

VII. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:

Request for Continued Examination

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